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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KCRM](#) [PHUM](#) [KWMN](#) [ELAB](#) [SMIG](#) [KFRD](#) [PREF](#) [ASEC](#)

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SUBJECT: SLOVAKIA ANNUAL REPORT ON TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

REF: (A) STATE 3836

- (B) BRATISLAVA 0043
- (C) 05 BRATISLAVA 0903

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12. (SBU) OVERVIEW OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES

1A. A COUNTRY OF ORIGIN AND TRANSIT

Slovakia is considered a transit country for trafficking in persons and, to a more limited degree, a source country. The International Office for Migration (IOM) states that due to the small number of known victims who are third country nationals or those trafficked only within Slovak borders, the country cannot be classified as a destination country, though IOM and the government both admit that some women may be forced to work briefly in Slovakia while in transit to their final destinations in western Europe. The Ministry of Interior (MOI) maintains official statistics regarding investigations; the General Prosecutor's office maintains statistics regarding investigations, prosecutions, and convictions.

During the reporting period, NGOs dealt with 24 repatriated victims of trafficking; Slovakia also showed an increase in the numbers of investigations of suspected traffickers, and the number of those charged. Based on the fact that NGOs and authorities deal only with those who identify themselves to the police and the underreported nature of the crime, the IOM estimates between 100 to 200 individuals are trafficked per year. IOM has conducted two extensive studies on the trafficking problem in Slovakia and considers its estimates reliable. One Slovak NGO near the Czech border worked with

12 returned victims, the majority of which were Roma. Shelters concede that their workers are only in contact with a fraction of the victims of trafficking. Most trafficking cases involve young women from regions in Slovakia with high unemployment. Experts allege Roma women and individuals raised in state orphanages, due to their low socio-economic status and less freedom of mobility, are more vulnerable to being trafficked by organized criminal gangs or acquaintances.

I.B. SLOVAKIA PICKS UP MOMENTUM AGAINST TIP

In April 2005, the Slovak Republic created a national coordinating expert working group on trafficking in persons, including members from the Ministries of Interior, Foreign Affairs, Justice, Labor and Social Affairs, Finance, Education, as well as the police Anti-Trafficking Unit, IOM, an NGO, the Plenipotentiary for Roma Affairs, and the Office of the Government (Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister). The group met monthly until the former Minister of the Interior nominated a National Coordinator for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons on October 1; the National Coordinator in turn asked the working group to continue to meet monthly. There are currently no plans to discontinue the working group.

The National Coordinator drafted a National Action Plan in December in cooperation with the expert working group, and the Slovak cabinet approved the Action Plan on January 11. The Action Plan provides for an increased network of victims support services, increased awareness and education campaigns for high school aged students and police officers, and the creation of formal victim assistance and referral protocols both within Slovakia as well as for Slovak victims identified abroad (refs B, C).

According to the General Prosecutor's office and IOM, most of the victims trafficked through Slovakia likely continue

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to come from the former Soviet Republics (especially Moldova and Ukraine), the Former Yugoslavia, and other Balkan nations, and are trafficked to the Czech Republic, Germany, Switzerland, and France, and to a lesser extent to Italy, Austria, the Netherlands, and Japan. Other victims come from economically depressed regions of Slovakia, including the Roma minority population.

Victims who have been returned to Slovakia are usually young, female, and Romani; many report being trafficked after accepting offers from relatives to arrange for work abroad. Some willingly enter into prostitution only to become trafficked at a later date. A male victim also contacted the authorities to report that an employment agency forced him to perform in pornographic films after taking him to Japan; he contacted the authorities only after he became aware of their continued recruitment in Slovakia.

There has been little change in the extent of the trafficking problem in Slovakia. Reports from partner organizations of Slovak NGOs in the Czech Republic and elsewhere do not show wide fluctuations in their numbers of Slovak clients. Recent in-depth studies of the Roma community in Slovakia and the Czech Republic have brought more attention to the acute vulnerability of Roma women to traffickers, but did not specify whether this was a rising trend.

I.C. GOVERNMENT LIMITATIONS

While there is now ample political will to pursue the fight against trafficking in persons among the Slovak government, the institutionalization of the new National Coordinator position and - more importantly - his budget has not yet been made permanent, as the position and its budget were implemented after approval of the government's 2006 budget.

The National Coordinator was given a budget of SKK 1.9 million (around USD 60,000) with which to implement an increased network of victim services and awareness campaigns for the first year; this money came from general funds of the Ministry of the Interior. The Ministry of Finance placed a "freeze" on the hiring of any new police positions, but the National Coordinator has moved forward with plans for additional training of current officers in TIP victim identification, and has requested the reassignment of others to anti-TIP portfolios.

The government faces severe financial constraints in other areas as well, which inhibits the ability of certain institutions to work most effectively. For example, the Police Anti-Trafficking Unit lacks funds for language training that would facilitate improved international cooperation. No dedicated shelters exist yet in Slovakia, though NGOs are working with several municipalities to create specialized shelter facilities. Domestic violence activists frequently complain about the lack of facilities for abused women, some of whom are trafficking victims.

I.D. GOVERNMENT SELF-MONITORING

The MOI provides internal assessments and baseline information regarding the nature of trafficking in Slovakia. IOM Bratislava conducted the most complete research based on focus groups, press monitoring, interviews, and available official statistics from embassies. A La Strada study has reported Slovak Roma women trafficked to Prague or Czech border towns near Germany, and anecdotal evidence from returned victims suggests this information is still valid. Traffickers, who are often known by their Roma victims, frequently recruit women through employment schemes. Some Roma women enter into prostitution willingly, fleeing the conditions of an abusive home or poor living conditions in a Roma settlement (or shantytown), and become victims of trafficking in the destination country. The Slovak NGO People in Peril and the Slovak Alliance of Women are currently working on comparable studies focusing on the point of origin. IOM hopes to undertake a study of the demand side of the trafficking equation in Slovakia, and has received EU funding for this endeavor; it expects the government will also financially back the study.

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I.III. (SBU) PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

I.A. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Slovak government and officials acknowledge trafficking in persons as a problem. In April, the Government created a national coordinating expert working group to address the issue (see para 2.A above). In October, a National Coordinator was appointed. Together, the working group and National Coordinator drafted a National Action Plan which was submitted and approved by the Government in January. Government interlocutors are responsive and motivated to the issue and have continued to impress Emboffs with their efforts, plans, and dedication to addressing this problem.

I.B. GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The MOI is the ministry most actively involved in combating trafficking, gathering information, investigating cases, protecting witnesses, and cooperating with the NGO sector; it is also the Ministry to which the National Coordinator reports. The Police Unit to Combat Trafficking in Persons, created within the Bureau of Organized Crime in 2002, coordinates most activity regarding trafficking both within Slovakia and with INTERPOL; members of the unit have traveled overseas to participate in seminars and training. The unit documents and investigates crimes, monitors known places of prostitution, investigates suspicious travel or

employment schemes, and contributes to public awareness by giving-presentations at conferences and conducting training. The Border and Alien police are responsible for monitoring border crossings for evidence of trafficking, with the customs directorate, and with the MFA also playing a role.

The Equal Opportunity Office at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MOL) supports NGO activity through grants, manages the implementation of international protocols regarding worker's rights, and passed in June a National Action Plan for the Reduction of Violence Against Women which dovetails with the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons. The MOJ is responsible for strengthening safeguards for victim protection. The General Prosecutor is responsible for the prosecution of traffickers, and reported increases in both the number of investigations and the number of charges filed during the last reporting period.

I.C. ANTI-TRAFFICKING CAMPAIGNS

Government officials and agencies cooperated with NGOs on anti-trafficking information and education campaigns, mostly targeting potential trafficking victims; IOM also trained Slovak military personnel assigned abroad - particularly on peacekeeping missions - to identify and report potential trafficking victims they may encounter. The Ministry of Education continues to assist in the organization of discussion groups in a number of schools and to distribute handbooks about working abroad legally associated with this project. The MOL has provided small grants to local projects seeking to raise TIP awareness. NGOs are using government and EU support to implement creative awareness campaigns including films and theatre performances. In addition, Slovak NGO Dafne partnered with several government institutions, such as the Dolny Kubin District Labor Office, to apply for EU grants and projects.

I.D. OTHER PROGRAMS

NATIONAL ACTION PLANS

The government passed a National Action Plan for the fight against trafficking in persons on January 11, 2006; the plan calls for the establishment of an increased network of victim support services (specifically regarding legal, psychiatric, medical, and social assistance), the creation of repatriation protocols for Slovak victims identified abroad, and increased media and youth outreach campaigns. In addition, the action plan finances the modernization and improvement of an anonymous police tip line for victims of trafficking, which has been successful in identifying both

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current and former victims who wish to help warn others of their experiences.

In addition, the National Action Plan for Women elaborates the governmental strategy for women for the next ten years in the areas of health, education, and political rights. The National Action Plan for the Reduction of Violence Against Women, which includes trafficking in persons, was also passed in June 2005. The MOL granted approximately 500,000 USD to small municipal projects and NGOs to support facilities and services for women and children. The government continues to invest in transforming large state orphanages into small family based care, with a special emphasis on strengthening the foster care system. UNHCR reported that the government's migration office established a shelter specifically for unaccompanied minors who enter Slovakia illegally; while UNHCR feels that the shelter goes a long way towards protecting minors from being preyed upon by traffickers, it has concerns about the security and management of the facility.

I.F. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND NGOS

Cooperation exists between the government, NGOs, foreign embassies, and other international organizations focused on trafficking through working groups and committees. Police worked with NGOs to receive training on victim identification and assistance, and are required by law to inform victims about how and where to find local support services. NGO leaders stated that police have begun to contact them directly about certain cases and communication continues to improve.

NGOs and IOM both report that the government's attitude towards trafficking has improved significantly in the past several years, and one NGO noted that anti-trafficking organizations that can demonstrate results have no problem finding government financial support.

I.G. MONITORING OF BORDERS

The MOI has continually strengthened border protection mechanisms and improved cross-border cooperation, particularly to gain eligibility for the Schengen Treaty in 2008. However, Slovakia continues to be a transit country for illegal migrant smuggling to Western Europe. Police continue to have success combating this crime, making significant progress - specifically along the Ukrainian border - in breaking up smuggling rings.

The asylum process continues to have problems managing the flow of migrants. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) has criticized it in the past as inefficient, but announced in February that the situation is improving slightly. The number of asylum cases granted increased from one to three percent over the past year, but UNHCR still notes a "generosity gap" in asylum decisions.

UNHCR believes that the majority of smuggled or trafficked persons "disappear" by terminating their asylum cases after being registered at reception and refugee facilities, though Slovakia has also made significant progress in deterring illegal migration across its borders: in the past year, the number of new asylum cases decreased by 69 percent, and the number of asylum seekers who terminate the procedure decreased 75 percent, from 11,782 people in 2004 to 2,923 in 2005. UNHCR believes that increased border security and scrutiny, particularly along the Slovak/Ukrainian border, has resulted in shifting smuggling routes.

NGOs monitoring asylum camps have hypothesized in the past that some women, especially Ukrainian and Moldovan asylum-applicants, may fall victim to traffickers for the purpose of sexual exploitation along this route; however, no research has been conducted in this area. The Alliance of Women has commented in the past that NGOs should have more access to women and unaccompanied minors throughout this process. The MOL funded two organizations to create facilities for unaccompanied minors, and the law has recently been amended to allow other organizations, besides solely the Migration Office, to serve as legal guardians for

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this population.

NGOs and IOM also continue to conduct police training and have cooperated with border police to identify potential trafficking victims among migrant populations. This cooperation with police has increased and is generally positive, according to NGO reps.

I.H. INTER-GOVERNEMNTAL COORDINATION

In April the government convened an expert working group comprised of various Ministry stakeholders, as well as representatives from the police, IOM, and a victims' support NGO. In addition, many agencies serve on IOM's steering committee, the Committee for the Prevention of Criminality,

the MOJ Working Group for Victim Protection, and the committee drafting the National Action Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women. The GOS has had an anti-corruption office in operation since 2001, and this year a special prosecutor and a special court against corruption began operations to deal particularly with high-level corruption cases. The court has already handed down several convictions, including a sitting Member of Parliament, the mayor of Bratislava-Raca, the Mayor of Velky Meder, and a doctor who was requiring bribes for medical services.

IJ. NATIONAL ACTION PLAN OF ACTION

The government's trafficking expert working group drafted a National Action Plan for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons, and the National Coordinator submitted it to the cabinet in January. It was approved by the government on January 11, 2006. The Action Plan prioritizes the additional steps to be taken by the government, placing first priority on creating an increased victims support network focusing on providing victims with legal, psychiatric, medical, and social assistance. IOM is assisting the government with the creation of this network, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is helping create a formal repatriation and referral plan for Slovak victims identified abroad. IOM, NGOs, and government officials have told us that they have been very pleased with the National Action Plan submitted by the expert working group, and that they are confident that its momentum will extend past the first year. The National Coordinator believes that a more institutionalized victims support network will also increase the government's ability to prosecute traffickers, as more victims will be willing to participate in investigations and court procedures against their abusers.

II4. (SBU) Investigation and Prosecution of Traffickers

IA. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Parliament recently amended and ratified relevant trafficking legislation to conform to EU directives and UN requirements. The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime was signed November 2001 and ratified by Parliament on February 4, 2004; approved by the president on June 14. Parliament also recently passed a new law on victim assistance requiring police to provide victims of any crime information on organizations that can help them. Organizations for victims of trafficking stated that this is helping foster closer cooperation between law enforcement officers and active NGOs.

Trafficking in Persons (previously trafficking in women) is defined and criminalized through Section 246 in the Criminal Code. Other related legislation includes: Section 216 a/b on trafficking in children, Section 204 on Procurement (Pimping), Section 215 on torture of a close person or person in one's charge, Section 205 and 205a on endangering morality. New amendments state explicitly the extra-territorial nature of this crime and acknowledge that the crime also entails fraudulent means, violence, threat, or other forms of coercion to elicit agreement from a victim older than 18 years person for a crime of trafficking.

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These laws are being used in trafficking cases and adequately cover the full scope of trafficking.

According to UNHCR, Slovakia is a signatory to all international agreements relating to trafficking in persons and most multilateral conventions on combating organized crime. The country participates in all EU structures and working groups in the field of justice and home affairs that

seek to monitor and control trafficking in persons.

I.B. PENALTIES FOR TRAFFICKING

The provision on trafficking (both for the purpose of sexual and labor exploitation) states that any person, who entices, enlists, transfers or receives another person to or from abroad with the intention to engage such person in sexual intercourse or exploitation is liable to a term of imprisonment of three to ten years (prosecution under the prior statute resulted in a sentence of only one to five years). A three to ten year sentence is also applicable to a person who exploits another person through forced labor, involuntary servitude, slavery, or other similar forms of exploitation. The penalty increases to a 5 to 12 year prison term if a) the offence is committed as a member of an organized group, b) the offense is committed against a person under 18 years of age, c) the offense is committed with the intention to use a person for prostitution, d) the offender gains considerable profit, e) the offender commits the offense against the will of another person. The penalty increases to 8 to 15 years if the offender a) causes serious bodily harm or death, b) gains extensive profit for himself or another, or c) the offense is committed as a member of a group operating in several countries. Lastly, a term of 12 to 15 years can be applied if the offence is committed by a member of a criminal group and causes the death of several persons.

I.C. PENALTIES FOR RAPE

The penalty for rape is on a par with that for trafficking. The sentence for rape is 2 to 8 years' imprisonment and could be increased to 5 to 12 years depending on the age of the victim or whether violence was used. The sentence may be further increased to 10 to 15 years if there is a resulting death. In 2005, 200 rapes were investigated, and charges were brought in 166. During 2005, the courts handed down sentences in 70 rape cases.

I.D. PROSTITUTION

Prostitution is not explicitly forbidden in Slovakia, nor is it regulated. The Criminal Code prohibits pimping activities, including coercing or taking advantage of or gaining from the prostitution of others. Sentences range from 1 to 12 years depending on the age of the victim and whether organized crime was involved. If the offense involves children under the age of 15 or between 15 and 18, the Criminal Code assigns two stricter penalties accordingly. Local governments can prohibit the offer of sexual services in public places and offenders can be fined.

I.E. PROSECUTION OF TRAFFICKERS

According to the General Prosecutor, the number of trafficking investigations increased to 47, and the number of charges filed increased to 30. 3 convictions were handed down in 2005, with an additional international ring sentenced in January to lengthy jail terms. This number has been consistent for the past three years and raises the total number of convictions since 1997 to 63. Early releases and plea-bargaining are not a formal part of the Slovak legal system; therefore the length of sentences are standard for those convicted and the government confirms that traffickers are serving the time in prison. A Czech woman found guilty of participating in a trafficking ring was sentenced to eight years in January, and has filed a request for transfer to a Czech prison facility.

I.F. PERPETRATORS

According to the testimony of some victims and offenders,

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trafficking in Slovakia is a highly organized criminal

activity either in small crime groups or larger international syndicates. Due to the transborder aspect of the local trafficking problem, most groups appear to be organized with international participation. Organized trafficking groups can consist of Germans, Czechs, Russians, Ukrainians, Albanians, Italians, Macedonians, Poles, or Slovenes. Among Roma, trafficking tends to be perpetrated from within the community. Male and female Slovak traffickers usually have prior knowledge and direct experience in the sex industry in Western Europe. They typically utilize employment or hostess agency schemes, but also rely on personal connections with women. In the 2004 Nitra case, famous photographers, businessman, and makeover consultants stand accused as collaborating with a Slovak hostess agency that reportedly solicited 230 women, in some instances using coercion, in both the Slovak and Czech Republics. There have been no convictions of any governmental officials in crimes related to trafficking in persons. There were no reports about where profits from trafficking were channeled.

I.G. INVESTIGATION OF CASES

The government actively investigates cases of trafficking. After the creation of the specialized anti-trafficking unit at Police Headquarters, the country participated in numerous international investigations and had several successful arrests. The Police utilize techniques such as inspections of suspected places of prostitution, and monitor internet sites actively. Police established a central anonymous information hotline for tips about traffickers or victims which has been used by both male and female victims. Slovakia has been awaiting the second phase of a UN project which will improve available equipment and training.

I.H. TRAINING

To date, the American Bar Association's Central European and Eurasian Initiative (ABA/CEELI), IOM, and other NGOs collaborated with MOI officials to provide interdisciplinary training concerning the treatment of victims, trafficking indicators, and investigative techniques. Trafficking in persons is also discussed in educational modules at the police academy concerning victim protection and human rights. The director of Victim Support Slovakia, stated that district police are learning more about working with victims of trafficking as a result of the new law requiring police to give detailed information about service providers to victims. She stated that police are more apt to consult with her organization on specific cases about how to work with victims. More training is necessary for border police, customs officials, and staff and social workers at the refugee camps and asylum reception facilities.

I.I. INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

The GOS cooperated with a number of foreign governments in the investigation and prosecution of trafficking cases. They have cooperated specifically with the Federal Criminal Bureau of Germany, the Austrian Criminal Service, the police force of the Czech Republic, and the criminal service of the Hungarian police. Most international cooperation occurs in the framework of Interpol and Europol, which Slovakia joined in 2003. The specialized trafficking unit notes that the lack of English language ability among Slovak police sometimes limits investigations. No specific number of international investigations is available.

I.J. EXTRADITION

Based on the Law on Criminal Court Procedures of 2002, Slovakia can extradite persons for any crime with a corresponding sentence longer than one year, except a crime political in nature. Slovak citizens can only be extradited when governed by a treaty signed by Slovakia. The UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime allows for Slovakia to extradite traffickers. In February, the

government signed a new bilateral extradition agreement with the U.S. allowing for the extradition of non-Slovaks to the

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United States.

I.K. GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN TRAFFICKING

There is no evidence of governmental involvement in or tolerance of trafficking. Despite governmental efforts to combat petty corruption on the borders and among police, the problem still exists. However, the criminal activities of these individuals do not reflect institutional acceptance on a local or national level. In general, women involved in "sex business" in any way are viewed negatively by society and are quickly classified as a criminal element.

I.L. GOVERNMENT STEPS TO END INVOLVEMENT IN TRAFFICKING

According to Police sources, there were no convictions of police involved in trafficking.

I.M. CHILD SEX TOURISM

Slovakia is not identified as a destination for child sex tourism. According to news reports and recent research, Slovak victims under the age of 18 have been sighted on the Czech-German border that has been known to attract pedophiles. The trafficking in children law, like the trafficking in persons, reflects extraterritoriality.

I.N. INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

-- ILO Convention 182 concerning the elimination of the worst forms of child labor: Ratified December 20, 1999
-- ILO Convention 29 Abolition of Forced Labor: Ratified January 1, 1993
-- ILO Convention 105 Abolition of Forced Compulsory Labor: Ratified September 29, 1997
-- Optional protocol to the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) regarding the sexual exploitation of children and the sale of children: Ratified February 4, 2004
-- The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime: Ratified in February 2004

I.5. (SBU) Protection and Assistance to Victims

I.A. VICTIM ASSISTANCE

The Slovak authorities are required to postpone deportation of any third-country national who seeks to enter a witness protection program or who claims asylum, thus providing temporary residency status. However, access to legal, medical, and psychological services for victims was lacking at the beginning of 2005; it was since identified as a priority area for government attention and is the cornerstone of Slovakia's National Action Plan. The country cooperates with local NGOs, such as Victim's Support Slovakia, Dafne, the Alliance for Slovak Women, and IOM, in order to locate temporary shelter and health services. Dafne and Urobme received start-up funds from the GOS to establish asylum facilities, but have not been able to raise additional funds or secure proper locations, though progress has been made in identifying potential options.

I.B. FUNDING FOR NGOS

The GOS provides money for Victims Support Slovakia to support counseling services, and its employees have all received special training for working with victims of trafficking. The MOI occasionally provides funds to Dafne to assist returned victims to Slovakia. The Ministry of Labor also administers grants to NGOs via the EU PHARE

program, and NGO representatives have been pleased with the funding they have received in recent years. IOM, however, was unable to secure a government grant for a program that would have provided for a study and the training of all Roma community social workers in trafficking prevention. The government continues to contribute to IOM expenses by providing basic materials and a portion of rent.

In 2005, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs received

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NGO grant requests totaling SKK 1,080,340 (around USD 34,000) for TIP programs; it awarded SKK 620,000 (around USD 19,800).

I.C. TRANSFER OF VICTIMS

Police refer identified victims to NGOs, based on a law requiring authorities to provide information about organizations offering support services to potential victims. The Anti-Trafficking Unit screens and refers victims who are actively participating in the investigation process or witness protection. IOM and UNHCR also distribute multilingual information to migrant communities at risk for trafficking.

I.D. RIGHTS OF VICTIMS

When an individual is identified as a trafficking victim, the victim's rights are respected and he/she does not face fines or jail sentences. However, it has been reported that unidentified victims have been treated as illegal migrants or prostitutes and have been detained or deported. The Alliance of Slovak Women stated that access to detained women or other potential victims in order to determine whether the individual could be the victim of a crime is minimal.

I.E. LEGAL ACTION AGAINST TRAFFICKERS

In the past, trafficking arrests are mostly due to victim complaints and follow-up cooperation, which the government strongly encourages; in 2005, the government has demonstrated an increase in investigations and prosecutions. By law, victims may file civil suits or seek legal action against traffickers. According to the IOM and UNHCR, victims are reluctant to do so because of lengthy trials and the perceived lack of psychological, financial, and legal assistance, though the National Coordinator believes an increased support network will help this perception. The MOJ states there are provisions for the compensation of victims, but many have difficulty finding legal representation without adequate resources. The MOJ is now currently implementing new EU directives that make the state more liable for victim compensation. The new law will also allow EU citizens of other countries to seek redress in Slovakia.

I.F. PROTECTION FOR VICTIMS AND WITNESSES

The government provides witness protection for victims, based upon a decision by an inter-ministerial committee. Other witness protection measures include recorded testimony or testimony through video connection, which is now mandatory for minors. Another new law explicitly states that the victim and perpetrator must be kept separate during the judicial procedure, thus requiring video testimony for most current trafficking cases. According to Victims Support Slovakia, this will also reduce the number of times a victim must give a statement to investigators and prosecutors, making the process for victims easier.

I.G. TRAINING FOR ASSISTANCE TO TRAFFICKED INDIVIDUALS

The GOS has cooperated with NGOs to provide training in recognizing trafficking victims, and it is included in the

curriculum at the Police Academy. The MOL recently gave two grants to organizations to provide specialized services for unaccompanied minors, which will further encourage more attention to the specialized needs of children. Slovak Embassies and consulates abroad are able to provide help to victims of trafficking including providing travel documents, assistance with money transfers, contacting relatives, arranging services, and travel home, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is currently coordinating a referral system in which repatriated victims will enter into the victims services network. In some foreign missions, it is permissible to allow temporary accommodation and boarding. Slovak embassies abroad and NGOs cooperate according to the needs exhibited in the host country.

IH. GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

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According to IOM, the present situation in Slovakia has improved drastically since 2004. The focus on increased victims support - including legal, psychological, medical, and social assistance - by the competent government Ministries, the National Coordinator, and the expert working group, will hopefully provide increased capacity and encourage returning victims to seek assistance. Some trafficking NGO representatives are quite pleased with the focus on victims assistance, and encouraged by the government response to their initiatives and requests.

II. NGO ASSISTANCE

The Slovak Alliance of Women announced that in 2005 they will help establish Slovakia's first NGO focused solely on trafficking, but the relationship between the two is still "like a daughter to a mother" at this stage. IOM is the only organization to have conducted research in this area and which has the capacity to launch nation-wide projects. The focus of their programming in 2005 was on education, particularly operating school discussion groups. Dafne, an organization based in Northern Slovakia, has conducted regional informational campaigns and helped repatriate victims, and has hopes to soon establish the country's first dedicated shelter for trafficking victims. Through contacts all over Europe, Dafne assisted women transiting to and through Slovakia. The Alliance for Women and Victims Support Slovakia provides a help-line for victims of violence and helps broker services for their clients.

16. (SBU) Anti-TIP Hero

Post nominates Slovakia's first National Coordinator for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons, Pavol Draxler, for recognition as an Anti-Trafficking "Hero." Draxler, who assumed the position October 1, was responsible for the drafting, editing, coordination, and approval of Slovakia's National Action Plan, and has impressed even non-governmental members of the expert working group with his ability to create "models of assistance" that draw upon the regional expertise of small Slovak NGOs to provide victim assistance and to realized the importance of securing ample and ongoing government assistance. Draxler has breathed new life into trafficking cases which appeared to have become stagnate, urging prosecutors to forward their cases to court. He also has proved an invaluable contact for post on trafficking and other human rights issues, often finding answers to specific questions about abuses and allegations. A former NGO representative himself, he brings a dynamic and results-oriented approach to the problem of trafficking.

VALLEE